

AOTEAROA YOUTH DECLARATION

WHAKAPUTANGA
RANGATAHI

2016

April 19th to 22nd

University of Auckland

SCHOOLS INFORMATION BOOKLET



UN+
YOUTH

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



AOTEAROA YOUTH DECLARATION 2016

Aotearoa Youth Declaration is UN Youth's flagship civics education conference, held for four days at the University of Auckland in April each year.

Aotearoa Youth Declaration has been put together with the aim of giving young New Zealanders from around the country a forum to come together and learn about issues faced in New Zealand and the community's role in combating them. Over four days the participants work in targeted focus groups to create policy and value statements on a broad range of issues. The result of this is the empowerment and education of young people, as well as the Youth Declaration, a document which reflects the youth voice.

Over the four days participants collaborate on a wide array of issues facing young New Zealanders every day. In small teams guided by UN Youth New Zealand volunteers, participants create action plans to deal with problems throughout various aspects of New Zealand society.

We work to empower all young New Zealanders to become conscious citizens, aware of the influence of their voice and their vote upon the direction of their country. By challenging our participants to tackle New Zealand's biggest social, economic, and cultural issues we provide young New Zealanders with community minded perspectives that will only benefit us all in the future.

This year, the conference will cater to 196 secondary school students, with over 50 volunteers leading the participants in their discussions. Across four days students will work in a group to target one issue in particular. They will participate in workshops, discussions and hear from industry speakers to develop a deep understanding of an issue and develop creative and practical solutions.

CORE VALUES OF THE 2016 YOUTH DECLARATION

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We wish to see all young New Zealanders become conscious citizens, aware of the influence of their voice and their vote upon the direction of this country. We believe educating youth in civic issues is the first step towards engaging them in society as a whole.

YOUR PLACE IN AOTEAROA

Not all people in New Zealand are born equal, and unfortunately the participants at Aotearoa Youth Declaration will not be representative of all people in our country. We will educate participants on the diversity of our country and provide them with tools to consider issues from a range of different perspectives.

MAORI TIKANGA

We believe that New Zealanders should know and understand the culture of our tangata whenua. To help foster understanding about Te Ao Māori and tikanga principles, we are running a workshop at the beginning of the conference to make sure the participants are aware of tikanga principles and to encourage them to hold tikanga principles at the forefront of their discussions.



ROLE OF THE DECLARATION



As a culmination of the opinions, ideas and passions of young New Zealanders, the Youth Declaration is sent to Members of Parliament, local government bodies, NGOs, businesses and sponsors. The Youth Declaration is to serve as one of the few comprehensive reference points to look to when considering the youth perspective on a societal issue.

The Declaration has become a widely recognised source of youth opinion, and is highly valued in the government and community. The Ministry of Youth Development responded to the Youth Declaration in 2013 with a comprehensive document detailing how the government is currently responding to issues raised and what some of the future plans to combat these issues are. This was continued in 2015, with the government currently responding to this year's Youth Declaration, as well as the Labour Party providing a researched and detailed response.

In 2016 we want to make use of the excitement and motivation following the conference, through guiding our participants in their journeys, as they become active members of their society. By using the Youth Declaration as a tool, we will show young New Zealanders how to engage with their elected representatives, make submissions and foster change in their communities through local community groups and businesses.



STUDENTS AND YOUTH DECLARATION

Experience the New and Diverse

Aotearoa Youth Declaration is all about introducing young people to new experiences, ideas, people and opportunities. The event is not just for enthusiastic debaters or youth council members, but rather is for all young people. We want the Youth Declaration to be filled with the many diverse voices of young people.

We want to help young people find the issues they are passionate about, and encourage expression through advocacy, volunteering or other involvement.

Gain Ownership of their Communities

We want every young person, across the country to feel like they are an important member of society, whose voice is valued and listened to, even at the highest levels of government. The Youth Declaration document contains statements written by young people who have been exploring these issues throughout the week, for the betterment of New Zealand society.

Hear about new Opportunities

One of our Core Values is Civic Engagement. As well as encouraging Participants to be actively involved in the law making process we want to show young people other ways they can get involved in their communities. Each Focus Group has close contact with two organisations from which they hear about their involvement in the industry in New Zealand and during our Social Evening Participants are given the chance to hear from, and talk to a range of people and organisations that offer involvement opportunities.

Make New Friends

Participants will spend 3 days in close quarters with the other 13 high school students in their focus groups as they learn together, are challenged together, and find solutions together. Our trained facilitators aim to create safe environments where all Participants feel comfortable, and where strong friendships can form. Several social events throughout the conference are great tools for building team spirit and creating a unified group.

REGIONAL DELEGATIONS



Aotearoa Youth Declaration is held in Auckland City Centre, however the opportunity to attend is available to young people based anywhere in the country. Regional Delegations offers young people from outside of Auckland a safe, fun and easy way to experience the conference.

Eight senior UN Youth Volunteers, several who are trained in welfare and have current First Aid certificates, take care of everything from assisting booking flights, shuttles, accommodation and meals for a group of approximately 45 Participants from around the country.

Upon arrival at Auckland airport everything about the Participants stay will be taken care of until departure. The senior, trained volunteers also make sure your young people get the full experience of Aotearoa Youth Declaration and are on hand 24 hours a day to assist with their care.



SCHOLARSHIPS AND APPLICATIONS

Aotearoa Youth Declaration wants the Youth Declaration to be the voice of the diverse young persons population of New Zealand. Diversity in ethnicity, socio-economy, education, background and culture are important to us. To achieve this Aotearoa Youth Declaration offers a range of scholarships to assist young people getting to the conference.

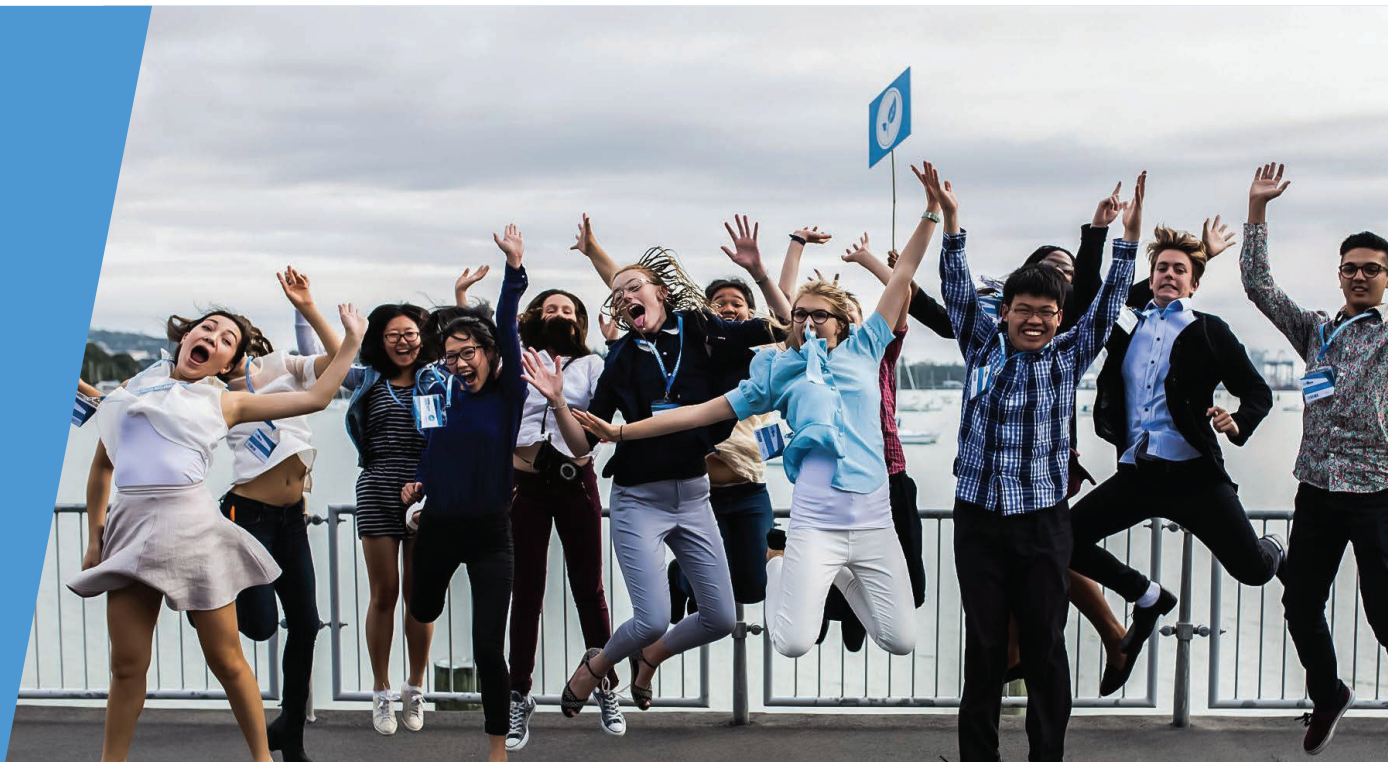
As scholarships become available information will be posted on our website as well as further information about UN Youth NZ and Aotearoa Youth Declaration and the 2015 Youth Declaration:

unyouth.org.nz/events/youth-declaration

For more information and to apply

To apply go to this same link and follow the prompts. Participant applications will be open from

Monday 21st February - Friday 11th March



WHAT IS UN YOUTH?

Established in 1999 as the youth branch of the United Nations Association of New Zealand, UN Youth New Zealand was formed with the mission to inspire young New Zealanders in becoming global citizens and active participators in their communities.

We are an educational charity that works to teach young New Zealanders about national and international issues and the role of the United Nations. We do this through developing and maintaining connections with organisations to facilitate youth involvement, running various educational conferences and through providing opportunities for social interaction between youth of similar interests. The UN Youth curriculum encompasses both educational and social objectives, particularly within our flagship civics education conference for high school students, Aotearoa Youth Declaration.

Through participating in UN Youth, young New Zealanders are equipped with a variety of skills that they are able to carry through adulthood. Our events create clear speakers, vigilant listeners and tactful negotiators through their unique format. Participants are left with a range of new skills that can be transferred and utilised in their studies and careers.

Through UN Youth's Model UN curriculum, we expand the knowledge of youth in areas like international affairs and conflict. They learn how to speak and debate from a range of different points of view and learn respect for other cultures. Through events like Aotearoa Youth Declaration, participants get to use these skills in an environment that values their own voice. Our civics education events aim to connect participants with their communities and their nation to create truly engaged citizens.



THANK YOU

Aotearoa Youth Declaration is an event that has impacted the lives of many young people, and we believe that the conference challenges and empowers young people to gain new perspectives. A skill that is then taken with them through life and shared with their peers - creating a generation of insightful leaders.

We encourage you to share this information with your students and give them the opportunity to attend an inspiring and confronting conference.



Regards,

Joshua Ramsay
Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2016 Coordinator

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